

News

from the Illinois Commerce Commission

Voice: Springfield. 217.782.5793 Chicago. 312.814.2850 FAX 217.524.0674 BBS 217.782.9233 <http://www.state.il.us>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 14, 2005

Contact: Brian Sterling
Phone: (312) 814-6653

ICC Joins State's Utilities to Help Katrina Evacuees

The Illinois Commerce Commission is working with Illinois telecommunications utilities to provide discounted phone service to citizens trying to rebuild their lives in the wake of hurricane Katrina.

Additionally, the ICC acknowledged that both Ameren and ComEd, Illinois' two major electric utilities, have greatly contributed to the hurricane relief effort through donations of both money and manpower.

The American Red Cross estimates that there are more than 6,000 victims displaced by Hurricane Katrina living in Illinois with friends, family or in other temporary housing, and many obvious challenges are facing them upon arrival here.

"Basic utility service is something most people take for granted," says ICC Commissioner Erin O'Connell-Diaz. "We need to do what we can to help these people. Imagine the difficulty in putting one's personal effects back in order without the use of a telephone."

The telecommunications companies, Gallatin River, Consolidated Telephone and Frontier Citizens Communications will waive the installation charges associated with establishing service as well as the regular monthly fees for up to 90 days for any person whose primary residence or place of business was destroyed or rendered uninhabitable by Hurricane Katrina. The ICC also commended SBC and Verizon for their efforts to assist Katrina evacuees.

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